

QUESTIONS TO ASK IN THE EVALUATION OF SUICIDAL RISK

These questions are intended to be used in a semi-structured interview format assessing potential suicidal risk. Not all questions may be appropriate or necessary to ask.

1. Suicidal fantasies for actions:

- Have you ever thought of hurting yourself?
- Have you ever threatened, or attempted, to hurt yourself?
- Have you ever wished, or tried, to kill yourself?
- Have you ever wanted to, or threatened to, commit suicide?

2. Concepts of what would happen:

- What did you think would happen in you tried to hurt or kill yourself?
- What did you want to have happen?
- Did you think you would die?
- Did you think you would have severe injuries?

3. Circumstances at the time of the child's suicidal behavior:

- What was happening at the time you thought about killing yourself or tried to kill yourself?
- What was happening before you thought about killing yourself?
- Was anyone else with you or near you when you thought about suicide or tried to kill yourself?

4. Previous experiences with suicidal behavior:

- Have you ever thought about killing yourself or tried to kill yourself before?
- Do you know of anyone who either thought about, attempted, or committed suicide?
- How did this person carry out his suicidal ideas or action?
- Why do you think this person wanted to kill himself?
- What was happening at the time this person thought about suicide or tried to kill him/herself?

5. Motivations for suicidal behaviors

- Why did you want to kill yourself?
- Did you try to kill yourself?
- Did you want to frighten someone?
- Did you wish someone would rescue you before you tried to hurt yourself?
- Did you feel rejected?
- Were you feeling hopeless?
- Did you hear voices telling you to kill yourself?
- Did you have very frightening thoughts?
- What else was a reason for your desire to kill yourself?

6. Experiences and concepts of death

- What happens when people die?
- Do they come back again?
- Do they go to a better place?
- Do they go to a pleasant place?
- Do you often think about people dying?
- Do you often think about your own death?
- Do you often dream about people or yourself dying?
- Do you know of anyone who had died?
- When do you think you will die?
- What will happen when you die?

7. Depression and other affects:

- Do you ever feel sad, upset, angry or bad?
- Do you ever feel that no one cares about you?
- Do you ever feel that you are not a worthwhile person?
- Do you cry a lot?
- Do you get angry often?
- Do you often fight with other people?
- Do you have difficulty sleeping, eating, or concentrating on school work?
- Do you have trouble getting along with friends?
- Do you prefer to stay by yourself?
- Do you often feel tired?
- Do you blame yourself for things that happen?
- Do you often feel guilty?

8. Family and Environmental Situations:

- Do you have difficulty in school?
- Do you worry about doing well in school?
- Do you worry that your parents will punish you for doing poorly in school?
- Do you get teased by other children?
- Have you started a new school?
- Did you move to a new home?
- Did anyone leave home?
- Did anyone die?
- Was anyone sick in your family?
- Have you been separated from your parents?
- Are your parents separated or divorced?
- Do you think that your parents treat you harshly?
- Do your parents fight a lot?
- Does anyone get hurt?
- Is anyone in your family sad, depressed, or very upset? Who?
- Did anyone in your family talk about suicide or try to kill himself?